

IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly cancel claims 6-11, all without prejudice, so that the claims are as follows:

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- C1
1. (Previously Amended) A method for eliminating polymer blobs in a photoresist mask formed at the surface of a semiconductor wafer, comprising the steps of:  
  
providing a semiconductor wafer having a photoresist layer formed thereon;  
  
exposing, baking and developing the photoresist layer to produce a patterned photoresist mask; and  
  
heating the wafer for a time sufficient to reach a temperature in a 100-140°C range and without cooling it, and then rinsing the wafer with deionized water at a temperature equal to or higher than the room temperature.
  2. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the semiconductor wafer comprises silicon.
  3. (Previously amended) The method of claim 2 wherein said step of heating the silicon wafer includes a step of post-development bake performed after said development step.
  4. (Previously amended) The method of claim 3 wherein the silicon wafer is immediately rinsed after said bake step.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 4 wherein the bake temperature is about 140°C.
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
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